

the vacation developments.  
If a public-private partnership  
could be created to handle the  
diamond sale, it could set a national

special bond issuance to hold onto  
this land until the other issues are  
settled.  
"Not that I'm aware of," Dabu-

can't imagine how any of  
those towns survive a large-  
scale development," Rosen said.  
"The economy is just too fragile up  
there."

# Illegal R.I. landfill appears to come from Worcester firm

By Andrew J. Dabillis  
Globe Staff

A Worcester company is being investigated by Rhode Island and Massachusetts officials for allegedly providing hazardous waste in the form of shredded automobiles to unlawfully cover a closed Cranston, R.I., landfill.

Although officials would not identify the company, a source familiar with the investigations said the business was Patriot Metals and that Massachusetts environmental officials had searched the premises to help gather evidence for Rhode Island investigators.

Rhode Island officials said hazardous waste was found in junked automobiles and car upholstery that had been shredded at the Worcester firm and taken to Cranston to cap a landfill that was closed in 1985 after leaching pollutants into the nearby Pawtuxet River for years.

"The scope of the operation is enormous," said Rhode Island Attorney General James E. O'Neill. He said investigators believe similar material was trucked or barged in from New York and New Jersey companies during the past few months. Officials at the Worcester company and at the landfill declined comment.

As landfills close around the country because of water pollution problems, state environmental officials and private operators have struggled with the best method to make them as inert as possible, usually by capping with loam or fill.

Samples from at least three locations at the Rhode Island landfill, owned by Daniel and Jack Capuano, were taken by investigators who had been watching the operation for the past few months after being tipped by an informant.

The capping material was being tested to determine whether it contained cancer-causing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), once a common ingredient in industrial products. PCBs were banned in 1977 after they were linked to a variety of ailments.

O'Neill said, "This material appears to be a good-quality loam, which you might spread out on a garden in the spring." But up close, he said, it is a black foam material. He said that after analysis, the material will be sent to a grand jury.

"This is simply an effort to secure evidence ... that will allow us to determine if any hazardous waste has been deposited here," said O'Neill.

In a telephone interview later, Bendick said environmental officials also suspect hazardous wastes were deliberately being sprayed or put into materials such as auto upholstery to disguise them as solid waste and get rid of them.

He said after the cars are shredded, "out comes several products and waste materials, one of which is little bits of metal and one of which is the upholstery ... some of that upholstery appears to be contaminated with PCBs.

"It tends to be oil-soaked material that from a distance looks like dirt or topsoil. This has been brought in from other places under the guise of final cover," he said. "There's absolutely no question the deposit of any solid waste in this landfill is unlawful."

He said the investigation could lead to charges against the landfill operators and officials at the Massachusetts company.

Rhode Island environmental investigators were also allowed to seize records at Capuano Enterprises in Cranston and Apache Truck Leasing Inc. and Metals Recycling Co. in Johnston, R.I., which had done business with the landfill operators.

By 1990, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Quality Engineering projects, 75 percent of landfills now operating will be closed because they cannot meet environmental standards, cutting in half the state's ability to dispose of waste using that method.

Robert L. Bendick Jr., director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, said at a news conference this week that the owners had permission to use clean loam or fill but "evidently they've also been bringing in unclean fill."

## Kennedy backs minimum wage hike

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